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MIKE KING KNOCKED OUT AT FINAL HURDLE BY AUSTRALIAN

Australian Jovo Scekcic has fought off a late challenge from comedian Mike King to win the South Island Poker Championships at Christchurch Casino, and take home a prize packet of over \$20,000.

Mr Scekcic says it was a pity he had to knock Mr King into second place.

"I really wanted Mike King to win as he was obviously the hometown favourite, but unfortunately for him it is against my religion to play bad poker," he says.

When there were 16 players left in the tournament, Mr Scekcic says there was a defining moment that left him on the front foot for the rest of the tournament.

"I had a couple of bad bets but managed to get lucky in one hand and pick up a fairly big pot. From there I always had enough chips to blind other players out and could afford to play aggressively without fear of running out of chips."

Mr King, who was both thrilled and disappointed at finishing second, says to watch out for him later in the week when the New Zealand Poker Championships begin on Thursday.

"Tonight was just an entrée for later in the week, matey," he says.

Christchurch Casino Poker Manager Mick Ryan says there was plenty of aggressive play from start to finish throughout the 13-hour tournament.

"A great final table saw five players go out within the first hour. The last four then had very even chip stacks before Jovo took two players out in one pot. In the end it came down to a final hand where Jovo picked up pocket eights to knock Mike King out."

The action continues at Christchurch Casino today with the New Zealand Pot Limit Omaha Champs. The \$500,000* New Zealand Poker Champs run from Thursday to Saturday.

*Based on a full field of 140.

Final results and prize money from the South Island Poker Championships:

1st Jovo Scekcic (AUS) \$23600
2nd Mike King (NZ) \$13500
3rd Mike Rodierk (USA)\$6800
4th Scott Hamilton-Hill (NZ)\$5400
5th Matty Yates (NZ)\$4700
6th James Honeybone (NZ)\$4000
7th Erich Stadler (NZ)\$3400
8th Craig Giles (NZ)\$2700
9th Ken Walker (NZ)\$2000
10th K.J Jennings (USA)\$1400

ENDS

For further information:

**Terry Sefton
Consultant
Chambers PR
03 3770 932**

**Mick Ryan
Poker Manager
Christchurch Casino
03 365 9999**